

## Summer 2026 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Hub is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the guidance of a mentor from the partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region. The pay rate for the summer 2025 program is \$31.25/hour or \$7,812.50 for a 250-hour project.

- Visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) to learn [how the program works](#) and to [apply](#).
- Be sure to review the application guide on the Apply page to confirm your eligibility before applying.

**Applications close at 11:59 pm on Sunday February 1, 2026.**

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## Project title: Foundational scoping research to advance FPIC implementation in Canada's forestry sector

### Project Background

The [Centre of Social Excellence](#) (CSE) is a unique educational initiative of the Earthworm Foundation focused on training and building the capacity of industry and practitioners to address the real-world social issues specific to their geography. We have successfully deployed this model in [Central and West Africa](#), [Indonesia](#) and [Brazil](#).

In Canada, there are growing expectations of corporate support for Indigenous co-management and decision-making related to natural resource management and respect for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes. Global brands and certification systems such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) are emphasizing FPIC as an essential component of ethical supply chains and responsible resource management.

Concerns linger about the forestry industry's reluctance to endorse FPIC requirements on traditional territories despite Canada adopting the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. While a provincial duty to consult exists, consultation and engagement is often piecemeal, ranging from simple information sharing to deep consultation. Alongside consultation requirements, confidential negotiations between companies and First Nations take place, contributing to a complex landscape of collaboration and resistance.

However, despite Canada's advanced legal landscape and active Indigenous participation in resource development, there is no consistent set of tools, frameworks or processes to operationalizing FPIC. Industry leaders, Indigenous communities, NGOs, and governments alike recognize the need for shared learning platforms and collaboration frameworks that bridge policy commitments and field-level realities.

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The CSE in Canada proposes to provide a national platform to share learnings, support capacity building, foster dialogue, and professionalize social management — fostering the skills, trust, and partnerships necessary to integrate FPIC into supply chain and forestry practices as well as community relations. The Centre will eventually provide training, applied research, and tools to support Indigenous Peoples, industry professionals, and civil society in developing a shared understanding, equitable decision-making, and practical pathways to consent-based relationships.

## Project description

Earthworm Foundation is establishing a CSE in Canada with the goal of enabling meaningful FPIC implementation across Canada's forestry sector through dialogue, capacity building, and collaborative partnerships that strengthen Indigenous rights, improve industry practices, and enhance social and environmental outcomes. We are at an early stage in this process and will spend most of 2026 planning, scoping, developing and refining our strategy and approach, building collaborative partnerships and developing technical materials.

## Project scope

The Sustainability Scholar will support the establishment of the Centre for Social Excellence (CSE) Canada by conducting foundational research to inform the Centre's approach to advancing FPIC implementation in Canada's forestry sector. The Scholar will focus on understanding the current landscape, identifying opportunities for collaboration, and helping to define the CSE's niche within Canada's complex context of Indigenous rights and resource governance.

Based on the workplan and timelines we have established for the Canada CSE development, we anticipate that the Sustainability Scholar will primarily support us through coordination, planning, scoping and research activities. The Scholar will undertake the following activities:

- **Situational Analysis of FPIC in Canadian Forestry:** Synthesize research on federal and provincial legal frameworks (e.g., forest policy, consultation and engagement requirements, legislation such as UNDRIP and DRIPA), forest certification requirements (e.g., FSC), voluntary reporting global schemes (e.g., TNFD, DCF) and frameworks, industry standards and case studies, and Indigenous governance systems into a situational analysis of FPIC in Canada. We are seeking to understand how FPIC intersects with each of these topics and where gaps and differences exist to define the CSE's approach, leveraging existing frameworks and policy. The intern will research relevant documentation and be directed to internal and external resources by the Earthworm team. This analysis will inform CSE Canada's strategic focus and training offerings and serve as the basis for some training material that will be developed later.
- **Stakeholder Mapping:** Contribute to the ongoing development of a stakeholder map and summary profiles that highlight relationships, influence, and interests. This activity will involve desk-based research and interviews with stakeholders. This work will define CSE's target audiences and potential partners for collaboration and training. Stakeholders will include First Nations and Metis Communities, Provincial Government Ministries/Agencies, forestry companies, and NGOs, subject matter experts and academia—engaged in FPIC and resource management.

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- **Outline training materials:** Using the situational analysis and stakeholder mapping outputs, support Earthworm in developing the outline for the CSE's training materials. For example, in collaboration with our project team, outline the course and module themes, content, and the primary learning objectives. Time permitting, the Scholar will develop an initial draft of a module. These materials will be tailored to an industry audience and for example, e-learning courses, presentations, case study exercises, etc.
- **Time Permitting:** Interviews with stakeholders and Indigenous partners integrate Indigenous and practitioner perspectives into the CSE design. The Sustainability Scholar will support consultation sessions and interviews with Indigenous leaders, industry representatives, and expert consultants to capture on-the-ground experiences, challenges, and opportunities related to FPIC implementation.

## Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).
- Deliverable includes:
  - Situational Analysis of FPIC in Canada describing the present context for FPIC implementation including the legal landscape (provincial and federal), certification requirements (e.g., FSC), voluntary commitments, industry standards and case studies, and Indigenous governance systems.
  - An outline for the CSE's training materials including course and module themes, content and primary learning objectives.
  - Time permitting, a draft module on an agreed-upon topic.

## Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 14.
- The Scholar is to complete their hours between 8 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.

## Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Ability to work independently, deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity with UNDRIP, DRIPA, FPIC an asset
- Interest in or familiarity with forest certification requirements, an asset
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct interviews, an asset

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Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at [sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca](mailto:sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca) if you have questions

## Useful Resources

We are holding a special **resume preparation workshop for prospective Scholars** on January 19, 2026.

[Click here for details and to register.](#)

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume, cover letter and preparing for an interview (there are many more online).

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>